

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 DPW-01 DHA-02 L-03

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3669

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGSC PBOR, PFOR, FR, SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA: FRENCH PRISONERS OF POLISARIO

REF: ALGIERS 0106

1. JN. 20 PRESS CARRIED REUTERS REPORT FROM PARIS THAT TWO FRENCH COOPERANTS, PIERRE SEGURO AND JEAN-PAUL DIEF, WOULD BE TRIED BY A POLISARIO "REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY TRIBUNAL." POLISARIO CAPTURED COOPERANTS FOLLOWING AMBUSH IN NORTHERN SAHARA OF MOROCCAN MILITARY CONVOY WHICH TWO FRENCHMEN HAD JOINED. IN PRESS CONFERENCE JAN. 19, POLISARIO SPOKESMAN HABIBALLAH IS REPORTED BY PRESS TO HAVE SAID THAT, ONCE INVESTIGATION COMPLETED, DECISIONS WOULD BE ANNOUNCED.

2. FOREIGN CORESPONDENT WHO ATTENDED POLISARIO PRESS CONFERENCE JAN. 19 HAD IMPRESSION THAT POLISARIO INTENDED RELEASE COOPERANTS IN NEAR FUTURE. HABIBALLAH, CORRESPONDENT SAID, HAD NOTED THAT TRAVELERS IN SAHARA SHOULD BE AWARE THAT, MOROCCAN STATEMENTS TO CONTRARY NOT WITHSTANDING, THERE IS A WAR ON IN REGION. PERSONS
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WISHING TO VISIT SAHARA, HABIBALLAH ADDED, SHOULD DO SO

UNDER POLISARIO AUSPICES AS NUMEROUS JOURNALISTS HAVE
DONE RECENTLY. IF THEY CHOOSE TO TRAVEL WITHOUT
POLISARIO AUTHORIZATION, THEY DO SO AT OWN RISK.
CORRESPONDENT INTERPRETED THESE REMARKS TO MEAN THAT
POLISARIO HAD DECIDED TWO FRENCHMEN WERE IN FACT
INNOCENT, IF MISGUIDED, TRAVELERS AND NOT PART OF
MOROCCAN MILITARY EFFORT.

3. AT PRESS CONFERENCE, HABIBALLAH REITERATED POLISARIO'S
JANUARY 16 DENIAL THAT IT WAS HOLDING ADDITIONAL FIVE
FRENCH TOURISTS MENTIONED REFTEL.PARKER

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